November 13, 2015

Dear Parent/Caregiver,

We believe that to do well in school, students need to be comfortable with who they are and feel physically and emotionally safe. In this effort to create a safe and caring culture, we will be going to the Mequon Nature Preserve Center on Tuesday, December 8 to participate in a Courage Retreat facilitated by Youth Frontiers. Since 1987, Youth Frontiers, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization based in Minneapolis, has been delivering programs to build positive school communities that help young people realize the importance of respecting themselves and others. Their vision is to change the way young people treat each other in every hallway, lunch line and classroom of every school in America, so that today’s young people make tomorrow’s world better. Last year, Youth Frontiers worked with more than 110,000 students and educators throughout the country. On the Courage Retreat, the Youth Frontiers retreat staff will focus on creating a more positive school community by engaging students in a variety of activities that build students’ empathy skills and teach safe ways to help prevent bullying. We look forward to this high-energy, interactive retreat and am very hopeful that it will help to build even more positive camaraderie among students and between students and teachers

To continue the positive effects of the experience, we believe it’s important for the entire community to be involved in supporting and communicating the messages delivered on the retreat. Because of this, we encourage parents and caregivers to inquire about the retreat experience once the student returns home by asking some of the following questions:

1. What activities did you find the most fun and the most meaningful?

2. Did you connect with any of the Homestead student leaders?

3. What do you think is the most common fear in your class or school?

4. What is one thing you can do tomorrow at school to show more courage to do the right thing?

Visit youthfrontiers.org/courage-retreat for more information on Youth Frontiers, access great parent resources and watch a video about the Courage Retreat.

Finally, the cost of the field trip will be $22 since the PTO is picking up a portion of the cost. Students are asked to bring a bag lunch and something to drink. We will leave Steffen at 8:30 and will be returning by 2:30. Dr. Anderson has given Youth Frontiers permission to contact the local paper about this wonderful event.

Thank you, families, for your support and encouragement as we continue to strive to educate “the whole child” at Steffen Middle School.

Sincerely,

Dr. Anderson and the Eighth Grade Staff

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\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ has my permission to attend the December 8th field trip to the Mequon Nature Preserve Center. I have enclosed a check for $22 made out to Steffen Middle School. My child will bring a bag lunch and a drink.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Due Date: December 1, 2015**